Appl. No. : 09/826,121 Filed : April 4, 2001

The examiner is thanked for the careful consideration of this application. Upon review of the allowed claims, applicants noted some minor changes to improve the form of the claims and to correct a grammatical issue in claim 29. These changes are made in this preliminary amendment, submitted along with an RCE.

For all of these reasons, it is respectfully suggested that all of the claims should be in condition for allowance. A formal notice of allowance is hence respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes that communications such as a telephone interview or email would facilitate disposal of this case, the undersigned respectfully encourages the Examiner to contact the undersigned. Recognizing that Internet communications are not secure, I hereby authorize the USPTO to communicate with me concerning any subject matter of this application by electronic mail (using the email address harris@schiplaw.com). I understand that a copy of these communications will be made of record in the application file.

Please charge any fees due in connection with this response, (other than those concurrently paid via EFS), to Deposit Account No. 50-4376.

Respectfully submitted,

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